



Special Interest Articles:

Key Volunteer's Thoughts

- It's Time for Summer!

A Word from our Civilian Personnel

Buffalo MEPS Commander's Corner

Did you know?

LCDR Harris was selected for promotion to CDR!

Congrats Sir!!!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

18 June – Singles Night at the Comedy Club

2 July –Organizational Day, Oppenheim Park

6 Aug – Training Day

Congratulations to:

PO Kane – Promotion to GSE1!

1LT Cosimo – Promotion to 1LT

New Arrivals:

Tim Dowell

Departures:

SGT Mayfield

It's Time for Some Summer Fun!

Yeah! Warm weather is upon us! This is something we would have liked for our Children's Easter party. Although the egg hunt came off pretty well inside anyway. The children really enjoyed themselves, the potluck and especially the magician. It seems even the adults liked the show well enough to try it again next year. Thank you to all who helped fill & hide eggs, create gift baskets, make and bring food (may the crock pot RIP.). Most of all thank you for coming and having fun. Your support of the MRSG has been outstanding and really has kept it going.

The MRSG won't be having a summer social event or fundraiser. (We're taking a breather until fall.) However, we will all be getting together at Oppenheim Park on Friday, 2 July. This park was a blast last year for all ages. From the volleyball pit, basketball ct., ultimate field, and wading pool/fountain there was lots to do in the sun. Last year's big hit was the water balloon toss. This year be prepared with not only your lawn chairs, Frisbees and balls, but also sunscreen, sunglasses, hats, towels and maybe an umbrella too.

Summer safety has so many things to think about. We're all out doors enjoying beautiful Western New York in so many ways. Remember the dangers of heat and humidity with having water handy all the time. Remember life jackets when you're on the water. Children's life jackets should have a crotch strap and not have a flotation pillow behind the neck. Improper life jackets will more likely cause drowning rather than prevent it. If you're either working out or just taking in the scenery from the saddle of a bike (or any other wheeled vehicle), remember your helmet. A helmet for all ages of rider is crucial to survival in the case of a fall or collision. It is important for we adults to remember our responsibility to model safe behavior to our own children and any child that may see you enjoying your ride.

I would like to bring to your attention a web site, <http://MytTricare.com>. This web site is great for searching for information about Tricare. You can get questions answered by searching the site or by sending an e-mail. If you register, you can interact with Tricare on your specific claims. This can be a powerful way to communicate with our traditionally difficult to reach insurance provider. (I don't know about you, but the phone menus and time on hold infuriate me.) Registering is painless but not instant. After filling out the short online form, Tricare sends you a letter with a pass code you then use to establish your log in password.

One final note, Tricare has transitioned to a new contract provider as of 1 June. (See the details online.) The transition may cause some difficulty when you go to your local pharmacist. However, once things smooth out, you can return to your pharmacy to square away any improper co pay charges you may have incurred. The best way to avoid this issue is to use the mail order pharmacy. Their website link can be found via <http://member.express-scripts.com/dodCustomome.do>.

A Word from our Awesome Civilian Employees

Both the Buffalo MEPS and USMEPCOM encourage civilian employees to develop socially and professionally in a variety of ways. During this quarter, two of our employees were provided an opportunity to think "outside of the box" in the work environment. In this article Mrs. Bette Chapman describes her experience at the Wellness Symposium and Ms. Debra Utecht provided information on the Women's Fair 2004.

Wellness Symposium April 5th thru April 8th

Representing the civilian aspect of the Buffalo MEPS at the Wellness Symposium was an honor for me. The Ice Breaker Party was embraced enthusiastically for all, and it allowed personnel the chance to meet face to face those individuals that they have been in contact with. The days following included briefings on issues that were seeking to be addressed. This experience allowed me to see that USMEPCOM is concerned with the civilian workforce and it enabled me to get a better understanding on the military way of life. I was very appreciative to have this opportunity.

Women's Fair 2004

The Women's Fair is an annual event sponsored by the Federal Women's Program Network/Federal Executive Board of Buffalo, and it is open to all federal employees at no cost. The event this year was chaired by the Buffalo MEPS, Education Services Specialist; Debra Utecht. Agencies within the Western New York Area exhibited information on various topics, including: Osteoporosis, Lupus, Women's Healthcare and Stress Management. Each year this event provides federal employees the opportunity to network with individuals and services that may be beneficial to their social development. This year's fair was well represented by both the community agencies along with federal employees.

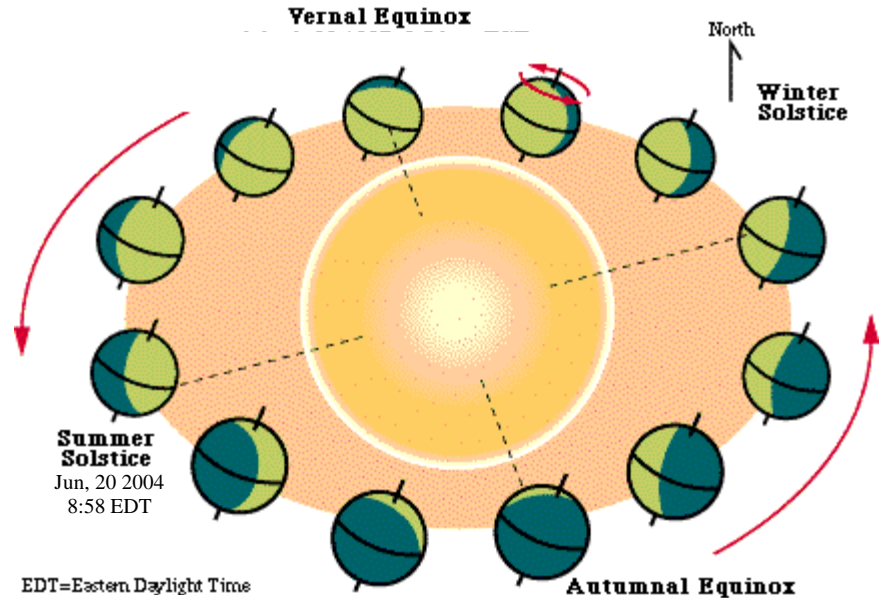


**Special Interest Article:
Continued:**

**Buffalo MEPS
Commander's Corner**

Commanders Corner

Well if you made it this far you have figured out that our theme for this addition of Readinotes is Summer and keeping the MRSNG information flow going. In a few days we will officially enter the Summer Solstice, which is the time of year when summer officially begins. As the picture below illustrates the Northern Hemisphere is tilting the closest to the sun at this time of year. People around



the world have observed spiritual and religious seasonal days of celebration during the month of June. Most have been religious holy days which are linked in some way to the summer solstice.

The Summer Solstice is also known as: Alban Heflin, Alben Heruin, All-couples day, Feast of Epona, Feast of St. John the Baptist, Feill-Sheathain, Gathering Day, Johannistag, Litha, Midsummer, Sonnwend, Thing-Tide, Vestalia, etc. "Solstice" is derived from two Latin words: "sol" meaning *sun*, and "sistere," to *cause to stand still*. This is because, as the summer solstice approaches, the noonday sun rises higher and higher in the sky on each successive day. On the day of the solstice, it rises an imperceptible amount, compared to the day before. In this sense, it "stands still."

In pre-historic times, summer was a joyous time of the year for those Aboriginal people who lived in the northern latitudes. The snow had disappeared; the ground had thawed out; warm temperatures had returned; flowers were blooming; leaves had returned to the deciduous trees. Some herbs could be harvested, for medicinal and other uses. Food was easier to find. The crops had already been planted and would be harvested in the months to come. Although many months of warm/hot weather remained before the fall, they noticed that the days were beginning to shorten, so that the return of the cold season was inevitable. The first (or only) full moon in June is called the Honey Moon. Tradition holds that this is the best time to harvest honey from the hives.

This time of year, between the planting and harvesting of the crops, was the traditional month for weddings. This is because many ancient peoples believed that the "grand [sexual] union" of the Goddess and God occurred in early May at Beltaine. Since it was unlucky to compete with the deities, many couples delayed their weddings until June. June remains a favorite month for marriage today. In some traditions, "newly wed couples were fed dishes and beverages that featured honey for the first month of their married life to encourage love and fertility. The surviving vestige of this tradition lives on in the name given to the holiday immediately after the ceremony: The Honeymoon."

Finally, USMEPCOM has made a great effort to make the vast amount of information that they and other DOD agencies put out easier to get to via the WEB. I encourage you to visit their web sites for up to date information at the following pages.

Wellness/Readiness: <http://www.mepcom.army.mil/wrprog/>
MEPNET: <https://mepnet.mepcom.army.mil/>
Buffalo MEPS Homepage: <http://www.mepcom.army.mil/>
Everything Buffalo: <http://www.buffalo.com/>